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Family and Medical Leave Act

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 provides workers up to 12 weeks of unpaid and job-protected leave for certain family and medical reasons. The FMLA applies to all private-sector employers with 50 or more workers and to all public agencies—state, local and federal.

To be eligible for leave under the act, a worker must have worked for the same covered employer for a total of 12 months, and must also have worked for a total of 1,250 hours or more in the previous 12 months.

You may take leave for the birth and care of a newborn; for adoption or foster care of a child; to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child or parent) with a serious health condition; or for your own serious health condition. If you qualify for FMLA, your employer cannot fire you for taking leave.

The U.S. Department of Labor's website has a helpful page of frequently asked questions about the FMLA.

If you think you have been denied FMLA leave, or if you think your employer has violated the act, you may file a complaint by contacting the nearest office of the <u>Wage and Hour Division of the U. S. Department of Labor</u>. The complaint may be filed in person, by letter or by telephone, but it also must be made in writing. There is a two-year statute of limitations—three years if the violation was willful.

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